

LVCVA

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justments in the procedures if and when necessary.

Aird urged the Board to consider formulating and sitting an auxiliary committee down with minorities, public officials and civic and social leaders from the respective communities to work hand-in-hand with the board to come up with a game plan that could be put into action. She

said that involving respective communities in the process of shaping policies would be more fruitful.

"There are certain criteria and certain techniques that are unique to minority-owned firms, that I don't think that the board or staff are aware of, to address the situation. I think that the board should invite members from the ethnic community, particularly

the ethnic business community, as well as some of our public officials and community leaders, to assist you in coming up with efforts that will get us up to speed into the 21st century. Parity and the things that we all see."

She said that parity is the issue and there is a tendency to become defensive because some people may think quotas when the key is parity.

"I have been here ten years and I have attended ten years worth of meetings and the tendency has been for the state, the county and the city to get us towards parity and I don't think that you understand what it means. So I think it's time, maybe, for policy and criteria ... and there are reasons why there is the level of response that you see," she said.

"We don't want the same situation that has occurred in Miami and Phoenix to happen here in Las Vegas, but if we continue on the same track as we have in past years, Las Vegas will experience the same things that happened in Phoenix," she added.

"We all benefit from the tourist industry and I think that it is time that we become serious about the ethnic diversity in our town. That we stop continuously awarding contracts to people because that's what we've done in the past. That we question the staff when they bring forward contracts and say "Is this a diverse group of people." Are we giving 2 million dollars to diversity? Are we going to promote it? All of you are responsible. All of you sign off for a personal contract that is exempted from the bidding process. That deprives the rest of the population from the ability to get that money and I think that is disgraceful and it should be tossed!"

"At least R&R goes through a bidding process and I demand that in the future everything goes through the bidding process. That money should not be obtained by all white people. There are a large percentage of foreign people that come in here, and ethnically diverse people. They pay that tab. To say that I will look and see how I can open the pool to more people is something that I would like to hear from our elected officials, from the businesses that get money

from us. Our relatives come to this town and if nothing else, that money could be used for recreational activities for us here. That's something that the library board has been asked to do. You all can do the same," she said.

Las Vegas City Councilman Bob Nolen chaired the meeting due to the absence of Clark County Commissioner Paul Christensen - whose mother had recently passed away. Nolen said that in reference to any action on sitting down and meeting with community leaders, that Christensen would have to organize it and coordinate the time frame to initiate such a meeting.

LVCVA staff member Craig Rowley addressed most of the questions posed by Mayor Jones, Shier and Boughner, but said that LVCVA would work more aggressively to see that minority concerns were addressed immediately.

One source told the SENTINEL-VOICE at press time that with 14,000 new rooms available for occupancy in 1994, LVCVA should have a decent profit to share with it's ethnically diverse population. It's time for the entire community to thrive.

PROVOCATION

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Also weighing heavily in his decision to grant mercy to Koon and Powell was Subsection 5K2.10 of the Federal Mandatory Sentencing Guidelines which says that if the victim's conduct contributed significantly to provoking the behavior, the judge may reduce the sentence below the guidance range "to reflect the nature and circumstances of the offense."

Under the guidelines, the judge should consider: the size and strength of the victim...in comparison with those of the defendant; the persistence of the victim's conduct and any efforts by the defendant to prevent confrontation; the danger reasonably perceived by the defendant, including the victims reputation for violence; and the danger actually presented to the defendant by the victim.

Others involved in the officers' conviction disagreed with Judge Davies' assessment of King's demeanor.

"They are saying that Rodney King provoked the police," Erik Rasmussen, a juror in the federal King beating case, told reporters. "I think the police provoked King."

Laurie Levinson, a distinguished professor of law at Loyola University, and an authority on the King beating trials, was surprised that Davies laid so much blame at King's doorstep. "It's the job of the police to deal with people who are provoking them. That's what they get paid for," she told The Los Angeles Sentinel.

Davies dismissed the argu-

ments of the federal government whose attorney, Steven Clymer, said, "the defendants have become symbols of racism and police brutality in this country." When Davies asked Clymer whether or not it was a case where police officers were just abusing their authority, Clymer reminded the judge that after Powell was done beating King, "he just laughed about it."

In his sentencing decision, Davies apparently followed the recommendation of the former chief counsel of the United States Sentencing Commission who in an unsolicited letter, urged the judge to be lenient towards the officers.

I do not pretend to know all of the facts of this case," wrote David A. Lombardero, a Los Angeles attorney, "nonetheless, it is clear from the extensive media coverage that Mr. King's wrongful conduct in evading, resisting and even taunting police officers substantially provoked the defendants' conduct."

Lombardero, who lives out-

side of the inner city where police services are administered and perceived differently, added that King's "wrongful conduct contributed significantly to provoking the offense behavior" of the police officers.

In an interview, Lombardero said the purpose of his letter was to convey the sentiment that the Justice Department "was taking an extreme position" in this particular case by calling for stiff sentences for Koon and Powell.

"The government's position is extreme when the government pushes for the maximum conceivable sentence, without taking consideration for other mitigating factors," Lombardero told The Los Angeles Sentinel.

Among those factors, in Lombardero's opinion was King's behavior.

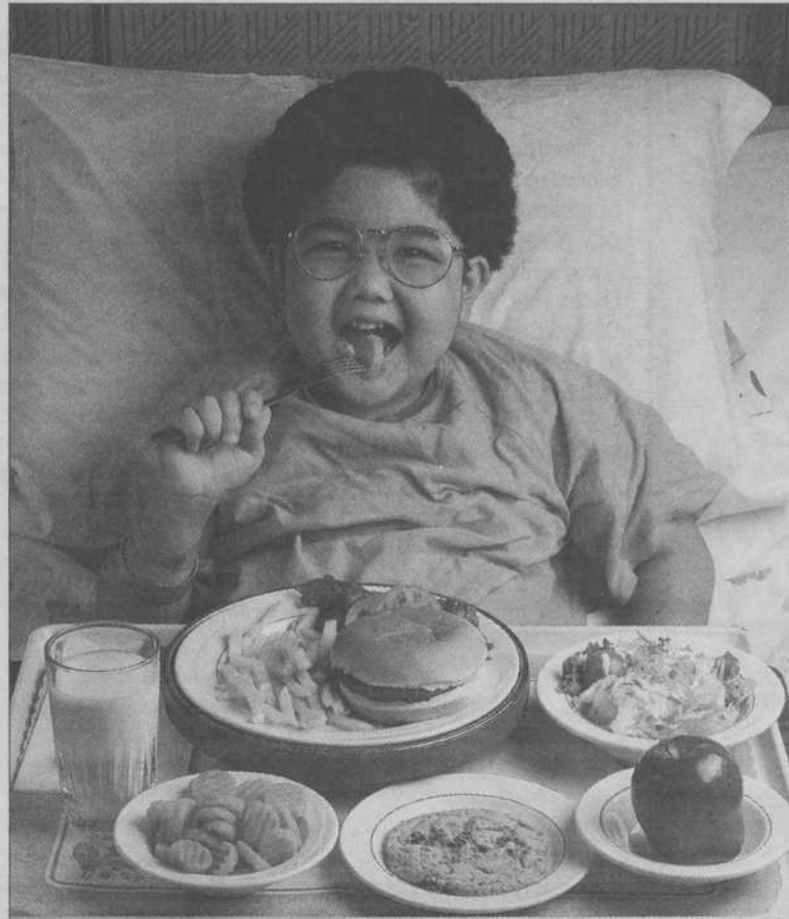
"When someone fights with you, the more chances there are to become emotional," the lawyer said. This is what he believes happened to the LAPD officers who beat King.

Since the content of his letter

has been published in L.A. area newspapers, Lombardero has been the victim of harassing phone calls. One person, whom Lombardero says identified himself as a black man, called him a "racist mother..."

The lenient sentences come at a particularly bad time for Los Angeles. Jury selection is now underway in the attempted murder trial of three black men, known as the "L.A.4+" accused of beating white trucker Reginald Denny on April 29, 1992, the first night of rioting after the state acquittal verdict.

"I think your biggest reaction will come in two months when you have comparison of the sentencing that went on (last Wednesday)," observed Terri Davis, an employment project manager at Los Angeles' First African Methodist Episcopal Church, "and the sentencing that's going to go on for the "L.A.4+. I think that could be a very big problem. I think it's going to be a very big problem, unfortunately."



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